

Hawaii Delegates' Report

5th National White House Conference on Aging
Washington, D.C.

A Summary of WHCOA Activities

January 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Listening to Hawaii’s Communities.....	1
Hawaii Steering Committee.....	1
Community Forums.....	1
Statewide Conference.....	1
Hawaii’s Top Five Recommended Solutions.....	2
Hawaii’s Delegates Announced.....	4
Pre-Conference Session.....	5
Hawaii’s Participation in the National WHCOA.....	5
Congressional Visits.....	7
Work Ahead.....	8
Acknowledgments.....	9
Contact Information.....	9
Appendices*	
A. Post-Event Summary Report	
B. Index of 70 Resolutions	
C. 2005 Conference Program	
D. 50 Resolutions as Voted by WHCOA Delegates	
E. Hawaii’s Top Picks – Resolutions Advocated by Hawaii Delegates	
F. Remarks by Mark E. Zeug	
G. “Bush on Aging: Not Now,” Washington Post, 12/20/05	
H. Implementation Strategy Sessions Schedule	

* Appendices are not in the online version of this report.

* Contact the Executive Office on Aging for more information (see Page 9).

Introduction

The 5th White House Conference on Aging (WHCOA) – first in the 21st Century – was held on December 11-14, 2005, in Washington, D.C. The Conferences are held once every decade and have served as catalysts for the development and enhancement of national, state and local aging policies in the United States. The theme for the 2005 Conference was *The Booming Dynamics of Aging: from Awareness to Action*.

This *Hawaii Delegates' Report* provides a quick summary of the activities that were conducted in communities in preparation of the national event, Hawaii's delegation, Hawaii's priority recommendations, and the delegation's participation in the National event. This summary is being presented to the Governor, Congressional Members, State Legislators, Mayors, and County Council Members.

Listening to Hawaii's Communities

Between 2004 and 2005, the Executive Office on Aging (EOA), in collaboration with the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA) and the County Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), engaged the statewide community in local preparations for the 5th National WHCOA.

Hawaii Steering Committee: Governor Linda L. Lingle designated Shimeji Kanazawa, Carol Kikkawa-Ward, and Bill Takaba to co-chair the WHCOA Hawaii Steering Committee. Comprised of state and county aging network members, the Committee was tasked to plan, organize, and conduct local activities to solicit input on recommendations for the WHCOA Policy Committee. The committee met regularly to design activities to ensure that Hawaii's residents' voices are heard.

Community Forums: During the period December 2004 through April 2005, the statewide County AAA conducted forums to gather community input on federal policy recommendations that were submitted to the national WHCOA Policy Committee.

Statewide Conference: The Hawaii Steering Committee and EOA compiled the issues and recommendations from the four counties and convened 70 delegates from across the state to deliberate and prioritize issues and solutions in the June 2005 State Aging Agenda Conference at the Hawaii State Capitol in Honolulu. Cosponsored by the EOA, PABEA, and County AAA, the State conference was designated an "Independent Aging Agenda Event" by the National WHCOA Policy Committee. The conference resulted in identifying five state priority issues and recommendations. A report of the results of the conference was submitted to the national WHCOA Policy Committee. The post-event summary report is attached (Appendix A).

Hawaii's Top 5 Recommended Solutions: Participants attending the conference deliberated, discussed, and voted on the top five priority issues and recommendations:

Priority Recommendation #1: Planning Along the Lifespan

There is a need to strengthen and expand Medicare to include long-term care with a goal to establish a universal health care system.

Recommended solutions to lack of sufficient funds:

- Increase tax rate.
- Crack down on Medicare fraud.
- Use general funds.
- Use war money.
- Adopt reduction of acute care costs through better practices.
- Have a different tax structure, private donors, and means tested.
- Have long term care insurance through universal health care.
- Create a (Medicare) Part E – cost share for long term care.
- Adopt long term care insurance like Japan.
- Develop similar plan as that offered to Congress.
- Appropriate funds for end of life care and expand hospice.
- Promote community-based care.
- Expand Medicare to cover long term care.

Recommended solutions to lack of consumer education:

- Conduct a national education campaign.
- Apply multi-media campaign.
- Provide for one-stop shop for information.
- Include education in school curriculum.

Recommended solutions to lack of planning for long term care:

- Include planning for long term care in the school health curriculum and other intergenerational programs.

Recommended solutions to lack of incentives:

- Offer tax credits.
- Create above-the-line tax deductions.
- Include long term care in “cafeteria” plans.

Recommended solutions to lack of political will:

- Educate legislators and politicians.
- Exert more political pressure/lobbying.
- Vote for those who support the program.

Priority Recommendation #2: Our Community

There is a need for coordinated social and health services to enable older adults (the well through the frail) to age in place and to promote the maximum opportunity for consumer choice.

Recommended solutions:

- Increase Older Americans Act funding; have new funding formulas; and have funding for wellness.
- Provide for one-stop shopping for aging and disability resources, i.e. aging and disability resource centers.
- Increase or improve transportation services, have more innovative and creative services, and have cost-effective coordination of services.
- Promote self-determination.
- Promote single access for all needed services.
- Standardize age guidelines to qualify for services.
- Provide incentives for services to be provided in rural areas.
- Provide for continuous consumer and community education.

Priority Recommendation #3: Marketplace

There is an acute shortage of qualified workers to care for older adults and disabled individuals.

Recommended solutions:

- Provide Federal educational loan incentives for students in geriatric, senior services and associated fields.
- Create labor policy incentives for long term care industry employment.
- Train caregivers, caregiver workforce, and entire healthcare workforce.
- Offer free training for direct support services workers.
- Develop volunteer pool to provide respite to burnt-out workers.
- Establish a national registry of direct care workers that would provide standards and an insurance pool.
- Provide financial subsidies for day care and all support services.
- Promote direct payment to caregivers e.g. “cash/counseling” reimbursement.
- Provide support to family caregivers.
- Provide caregiver services through coordinated system of services.

Priority Recommendation #4: Social Engagement

Effective individual adaptation to the conditions of aging.

Recommended solutions:

- Promote good health, attitude, and personal responsibility through public awareness and education.
- Increase permanent and ongoing funding for primary prevention and the continuum of care.
- Develop an intergenerational friendly community (to include but not be limited to transportation, social support, housing, and access to services.)

Priority Recommendation #5: Planning Along the Lifespan

There is a need to strengthen and preserve Social Security and not destroy it.

Recommended solutions on politics and public opinion:

- Encourage President Bush to talk.
- No privatization.
- Cut tax breaks to wealthy.
- Change administration.

Recommended solutions on lack of information and education:

- Provide better information on the problem – provide specific information.
- Develop alternatives.

Recommended solutions on investment alternatives:

- Explore investment alternatives for trust fund.

Recommended solution on inaction:

- Raise tax cap.
- Raise salary cap.
- Extend the date when benefits are received.
- Keep the trust fund sacred.

Hawaii's Delegation Announced

By the spring of 2005, the national WHCOA Policy Committee confirmed the following delegates from Hawaii.

State Designees:

Governor: Brenda Ho, Carol Kikkawa-Ward, Pat Sasaki
Senator Daniel Inouye: Kealoha Takahashi
Senator Daniel Akaka: Al Hamai
Representative Neil Abercrombie: Karen Miyake
Representative Ed Case: John Tomoso

National Congress of American Indians: Haunani Apoliona

At-Large Delegates selected by National Committee:

Julie Jow
Roy Katsuda
Remy Rueda
Mark Zeug

Observer/Resource Person: Alan Parker

Pre-Conference Session

The Hawaii Steering Committee convened the Hawaii delegates in a pre-conference session. The purpose was to offer an opportunity to the delegates to get to know one another, understand the state conference process and outcomes (recommendations), and be apprised of logistical issues. The co-chairs of the Steering Committee briefed members on the background and history of the WHCOA, statewide conference process and recommendations, discussion on resolutions, WHCOA agenda, roles and expectations of Hawaii delegates, and logistical concerns. Outcomes of this pre-conference session were that the delegates: 1) united as a team and 2) agreed to caucus daily and strategize daily activities. Al Hamai, certified parliamentarian, served as resource person on assembly process.

Hawaii's Participation in the National WHCOA

Resolutions Compiled: The WHCOA Policy Committee compiled all the recommendations from 400+ forums held across the nation. The summaries of the forums were website-transmitted describing the major recommendations from the general public over the past year. The Index of Resolutions is attached (Appendix B). These recommendations were synthesized into 73 Resolutions.

Conference Agenda and Instructions: The final conference program (Appendix C) entailed instructions for the 1,200 official delegates to the WHCOA.

- All delegates would vote for 50 of the 73 resolutions on December 11 and 12.

- All delegates would develop implementation strategies for the 50 resolutions (Appendix D) on December 13 in simultaneous and/or duplicate work sessions on December 13. The voting results would be posted at around 9:00 p.m. on December 12 and breakout sessions times and locations would be delivered to the delegates' hotel rooms by 6:00 a.m. on December 13.
- The top ten resolutions and implementation strategies would be announced on the morning of December 14, final day of the conference.

Hawaii Caucus: Evening of December 10

The Hawaii group met over dinner and identified 19 among the 73 resolutions that most closely captured Hawaii's recommended solutions. Al Hamai, Roy Katsuda, Karen Miyake, and John Tomoso developed and duplicated 500 copies of a Hawaii flyer that promoted the delegates' agenda (19 resolutions). The 19 resolutions advocated by the Hawaii delegation are shown in Appendix E. The Hawaii flyers were accompanied by voting incentives including macadamia nut packets acquired by Brenda Ho. John Tomoso requested and got display table space for "I-Love-Maui" pins and travel-size bottles of "Maui Babe" sun tan lotion courtesy of Maui County. The Hawaii team was successful in promoting its agenda.

December 11-12 Plenary Sessions

A pre-conference *Healthy Living Celebration!* program on December 11 featured Hawaii delegate Mark Zeug, Chairman of the National Senior Olympics Committee. A copy of Mr. Zeug's speech is attached (Appendix F).

The opening plenary session on December 12 featured Mike Leavitt, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary (the audience groaned "No," when he said response time on Medicare Part D's hotline took only four minutes); Josefina Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging; Claude Allen, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy; David Walker, U.S. Comptroller General; Craig Barrett, Chair of INTEL Corporation; and Dorcas Hardy, Chair of the WHCOA Policy Committee.

Citing the 10-percent rule of referendum (petitioning for consideration by 10 percent or more of delegates), an older delegate stood during a plenary session and asked to present a petition to add resolutions for voting. He had gathered signatures of more than 20 percent of the 1,200 official delegates. The convener loudly said "No!" and after being asked by the delegate again about the petition, gestured to the stage floor as the place the petition could be placed. Neither the convener nor WHCOA Chair Dorcas Hardy acknowledged the rule of procedure. The New York State delegation later filed a written letter protesting the conference process and distributed copies to other delegates (see Appendix G for Washington Post article).

Evening of December 12

The 50 of 73 resolutions voted on by 1200 delegates were posted electronically in the WHCOA registration area at 9:30 p.m. The Hawaii group then met to strategize on Hawaii's participation in implementation sessions the next day. The approach adopted by the group was to advance Hawaii's priority solutions at the assigned sessions. Haunani Apoliona would also advocate the Native American priority issues.

Conference planners promised to have the strategies implementation session schedule delivered to all delegates' hotel rooms by early morning of December 13. See Appendix H.

Top Ten Resolutions Announced on December 14

Top Ten Resolutions were ranked by the number of votes received. These top resolutions are:

- 17: Reauthorize Older Americans Act with increased funding.
- 30: Develop a coordinated, comprehensive long term care strategy
- 22: Ensure transportation options that assure mobility and independence.
- 50: Strengthen and improve Medicaid program.
- 51: Strengthen and improve Medicare program.
- 41: Support geriatric education and training for workforce, paid and unpaid.
- 42: Promote innovative models of non-institutional long term care.
- 40: Attain adequate numbers of healthcare professionals who are skilled, culturally competent, and specialized in geriatrics.
- 71: Improve State and local based integrated delivery systems to meet the needs of 21st Century seniors.
- 4: Establish principles to strengthen Social Security (strategies included "no" to privatization).

Nine of the Top Ten Resolutions Addressed.

Hawaii's delegates were pleased that Hawaii's priorities were addressed by nine of the top ten resolutions. Delegates were advised that the 50 resolutions and implementing strategies would be posted on the WHCOA website and submitted to the President and all Governors.

Congressional Visits

The Hawaii delegates (including Karen Miyake's daughter, Mrs. Katsuda and Mrs. Zeug) organized and met with Hawaii's congressional team. The delegates were warmly received by all offices; they met with Senator Daniel Inouye, Representative Neil Abercrombie, Representative Ed Case, and staff of Senator Daniel Akaka. Representative Case graciously waited until 6:30 p.m. to meet with the Hawaii delegates,

following a lengthy visit with Representative Abercrombie. The Congressional team offered their insights on legislative processes and aging issues.

Work Ahead

Much work remains to be done by all, including advocating the funding and reauthorization of the Older Americans Act that enables information, services, and advocacy assistance for Hawaii's 230,000+ older adults, family caregivers, and persons who are planning for longevity and long-term care. States and local communities must also be involved in supporting and promoting the 50 resolutions passed at the Conference.

Through the grassroots public input processes held by county AAA and the EOA, a number of local issues were identified. The input provided will be examined and integrated into the area and state planning processes.

Acknowledgments

- Co-Chairs Shim Kanazawa, Carol Kikkawa-Ward, Bill Takaba and members of the Hawaii Steering Committee for the WHCOA whose experience and collective wisdom guided Hawaii's preparations for the 2005 Conference.
- Hawaii's County AAA for assuring community input to Hawaii issues and solutions development.
- EOA planner Shirley Kidani for timely, critical, and voluminous logistical support and EOA staff for assistance at the State Conference in June 2005.
- Brenda Ho, John Tomoso, and Pat Sasaki for arranging "calling cards" and voting incentives.
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